



ASLEF

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JOURNAL
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Ballot – why the political fund is vital for every member of this union



IAIN BIRRELL: Protected conversations at work

TOM BURNS and **NIAL CAMPBELL:** State of the union – are England and Scotland better together?

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Building on our legacy

I SPOKE last month about our positive conference, and the forward looking debates we had in Brighton, and how they have given us a truly sound basis on which to build. The foundation, and the strength, of any trade union is its membership and collective history. This has been brought home to me recently by a number of events that underline how far we have come and how much we owe those who went before us.

ASLEF was founded in 1880 out of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants because drivers felt they were not fully served by a multi-grade organisation; a brave decision when trade unionism was in its infancy and one that established our tradition as a member-led organisation, based on the dedication of lay representatives, and the protection, education, industrial and political aspirations that have brought us where we are today.

In the last few weeks I have attended numerous branches celebrating significant milestones – York 130 years, Doncaster 125 years, Paddington 130 years – and it's humbling to think of the thousands of members and hundreds of branch secretaries and reps who have written a few pages in the living history of unity, support and solidarity that makes this union what it is.

If we are to build on that legacy in the face of a constant barrage of anti-union and anti-worker legislation we need to have a voice that shouts loud and clear and is not solely about the use of industrial muscle. We must be able to campaign and to do that we need a political fund. We fought for the right to have a political voice – it took until 1913 to achieve that – and although Mrs Thatcher sought to silence our voice we are still able, at the moment, to speak up for our members. We need a fund that allows us to campaign for the needs of our members and the needs of our industry. So let's send a clear message – that we are a strong, campaigning union – by voting a resounding Yes in the forthcoming political fund ballot.

Mick Whelan, general secretary



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ABOUT ASLEF

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Donny – 125 up

MICK WHELAN, general secretary of ASLEF, writes in his column on page 3 what he often says at branch meetings up and down the country – that the strength of this union is in its membership, and branch structure, and its sense of showing solidarity in struggle through its collective history. He underlined that point when he spoke at a civic reception to mark the 125th anniversary of the founding, in 1889, of the Doncaster branch of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen. 'Brothers in unity for mutual help is what it says on the banner and that is what this trade union has traditionally been about for its brothers – and sisters – on the footplate.'

Mick joined Tosh McDonald, EC member for District 4; Rosie Winterton, Labour MP for Doncaster Central, and Caroline Flint, Labour MP for the Don Valley; Manuel Cortes, general secretary of the TSSA; Ros Jones, the Labour councillor who saw off Peter Davies, and the English Democrats, to become the directly elected executive Mayor of Doncaster; Councillor Eddie Dobbs, the civic mayor of Doncaster, who does the ceremonial duties; Mick Rix, our former general secretary, now national officer of the GMB; and Bill Ronksley, a former president, with 72 years' active ASLEF membership, to celebrate the occasion.

'Over the last 125 years we have seen many



Mick Whelan makes a presentation to veteran ASLEF activist Bill Ronksley



Doncaster branch celebrates its 125th anniversary with the help of local MPs Caroline Flint and Rosie Winterton (above)

changes,' said Tosh at the reception at the elegant Georgian Mansion House, built in 1725, and one of only four such buildings to survive (the others are in York, Bristol and the City of London). 'We have moved from steam to diesel and electric. But one thing that hasn't changed is the commitment and solidarity shown by our members. And that is a tradition we hope will continue for another 125 years.'

FREIGHT IS GREAT

New figures from the Office of Rail Regulation show that the amount of freight carried by rail in Britain continues to grow. 'Rail freight, which grew by almost 6% last year, is integral to the productivity and efficiency of many sectors of the UK,' said Philippa Edmunds, manager of Freight on Rail. 'So it is crucial that the government continues to invest in rail freight.'

TARTAN RUG

Serco, the company which has been awarded the contract to run the Caledonian sleeper between Scotland and London, promised a 'distinctively Scottish' identity for the service when it bid for the franchise. The first 'distinctively Scottish' thing it has done is order its new rolling stock from Spain.

CONFERENCES

The 130th Durham Miners' Gala is on Saturday 12 July. The Tolpuddle Martyrs' festival and rally is at Tolpuddle, near Dorchester, from Friday 18 to Sunday 20 July. The International Transport Workers' Federation Congress is in Sofia, Bulgaria, from Sunday 10 to Saturday 16 August. The Burston strike school rally is at Burston, near Diss, in Norfolk on Sunday 7 September. The Trades Union Congress is at the BT Convention Centre, King's Dock, Liverpool, from Sunday 7 to Wednesday 10 September. The Labour Party conference, the last before next year's general election, is at the Manchester Central exhibition centre from Sunday 21 to Wednesday 24 September.

Place of safety

MICK HOLDER, of ASLEF's health and safety department, celebrates 40 years of protection at work



THE TUC is calling for an end to attacks by employers and the Conservative-Liberal Democrat government on health and safety regulations as it prepares to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974). The Tories, and their Lib Dem partners, have attacked health and safety laws – using the Age of Austerity agenda of brutal public sector cuts to undermine enforcement. The Health and Safety Executive and local environmental health officers have been battered by the coalition although the Office of Rail Regulation has been left pretty much intact.

But it would be wrong to presume that those of us working in rail are safe as the tone of the attacks is that health and safety rules to protect people at work are somehow a 'burden on business'. This opens the door for all those wildly exaggerated 'elf'n'safety gone mad' stories in the press (most of which are subsequently debunked) and undermines the reason health and safety protection is so important.

Also, regulations which protect rail workers away from the driver's cab – in the office, mess room, canteen – have been attacked, as have their Approved Codes of Practices or guidance notes. While the work to re-draft some of this is incomplete it is unlikely they will be as useful to ASLEF health and safety reps in the future as they have been in the past.

The TUC has produced a comprehensive guide to this government's attacks in its booklet *Toxic, Corrosive and Hazardous: The Government's Record on Health & Safety* which is available to download free from the TUC website at www.tuc.org.uk as is its pamphlet *Health & Safety: Time for Change – A Trade Union Manifesto for Reclaiming Health & Safety at Work*.

It is worth remembering that the Health and Safety at Work Act was the first time all people working in the UK were protected by law. Whatever the Richard Littlejohns of this world think, the fact is there are far fewer people killed or injured at work now because of this piece of legislation.

A key factor in that reduction was that the act enshrined the role of trade union H&S reps in law – no other union rep has such rights – and lets reps demand employers set up H&S committees to discuss improving health and safety performance.



Dan's teams display their true colours

Red is the colour, ASLEF is the name

SPONSORSHIP is big business these days. Global brands pay millions of pounds, dollars and euros to put their name on the front of a Premier League shirt or on the side of a Formula 1 car. And, on a local level, curry houses up and down the country pay a couple of bob to sponsor the local pub team. But, with the exception of the GMB's ill-fated sponsorship of Swindon, which ended when the League Two club appointed Paulo Di Canio, an admirer of Mussolini, as manager, it is rare to see the name of a trade union on the front of a football shirt.

But Maindy Corries, a junior football club with teams in the Cardiff & District League, turn out in red and white stripes embossed with the letters ASLEF. Not because they all want to grow up and become train drivers, though some of them do, but because one of the club's coaches is Daniel Masrani.

Dan, 41, who has been on the railway for 11 years and drives for Arriva Trains Wales, got involved in the club, which runs teams from

Under 7 to Under 16, when his three children – Saul, 17, Jack, 11, and seven-year-old Luke – started playing.

'My eldest first got involved, and then when my second boy started playing, I started coaching there,' says Dan. 'I love being involved, and passing knowledge on.'

The club has 22 teams, playing on different size pitches according to age. It is, says Dan, as much about taking part as winning, and he makes sure every kid gets some game time.

'When I took over the team, we had hand me down shirts in pretty bad condition. We wanted to get the boys some new kit so I approached the branch about a bit of sponsorship and now the Under 7s and Under 11s have got nice new kit with ASLEF on the front. The kids and the club are delighted and it gets ASLEF a bit of recognition, too.'

Maindy Corries have won some silverware and, back, home, Dan's son Jack has progressed and is now on the books – as part of the academy – of Cardiff City, who were relegated last season from the Premier League to the Championship.

CRAIG CAMERON, District 2 LGBT representative committee member, has been elected onto the STUC general council in the LGBT reserved seat.

500 CLUB: Nottingham branch, with number 107, won the May draw, scooping the RMS prize money jackpot of £370. D Bates, with number 34, won the June draw, also winning £370.

Off the rails



ANDY BOTHAM, a driver on East Midlands Trains, company council rep, and Labour councillor for Matlock on Derbyshire County Council, was put out that while Eric Pickles, for the Conservative-led coalition, brought in new regulations requiring

members of trade unions to register the fact, councillors who are Freemasons can conceal that fact. That most councillors who belong to a union represent Labour, while most masons are Conservative, has nothing to do with anything, says a spokesman for Mr Pickles, apparently with a straight face. Andy decided to have a bit of fun – for 'principle, parity and clarity' he called it – and got a measure through the council that councillors who are Freemasons should also own up. This went down like a bucket of cold sick with the masons – a secret society, with funny handshakes, rolled up trouser legs, and curious oaths – who want to keep what they do, well, secret. The move went down so badly, in fact, that Barry Lewis, leader of the Conservative group on the county council, condemned the move as tantamount to what Hitler did to the Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe and what the apartheid regime in South Africa did to the ANC. A tad over the top, any reasonable person might think. But there is a principle at the heart of this – about transparency in local government – and it's splendidly hypocritical, albeit very revealing, that while David Cameron, Eric Pickles and Barry Lewis insist trade unionists record our membership on a register of municipal interests, Tories can keep their membership of the masons – which traditionally operates a 'you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours' policy – top secret.



PRIVATE EYE had a bit of fun at the expense of Wee Eck, Scotland's First Minister, in its *Signal Failures* column. Under the punny headline *Souter's You, Sir* it reports on the SNP government's

failure to allow a Scottish public sector operator to compete with Dutch and German state railways for Scottish rail franchises. 'Could this,' muses the *Eye's* mischievous correspondent Dr B Ching, 'have been related to the £500,000 donation for the SNP's 2011 election campaign from Stagecoach founder Brian Souter, who has made millions from rail privatisation, including Stagecoach's half share of Virgin Trains?' The *Eye* also diligently recalls that Souter has donated £100,000 to Christians for Independence, cash that doesn't count towards the Yes campaign's spending limit...



GUIDO FAWKES, the scurrilous blog run by Paul Staines, has revealed that Transport for London has splashed a lot of fare-paying passengers' cash –

£254,322 – to boost its Twitter followers and Facebook likes. TfL, which likes to say it knows how to spend money wisely, has 26 Twitter feeds and two Facebook pages. And spends a cool quarter of a million pounds a year on 'promotion' – to artificially inflate its figures – so its tweets and statuses appear in Londoners' timelines.

I have a dream – ASLEF at the TUC

FLOYD DOYLE, chair of ASLEF's Black & Ethnic Minority Representative Committee, reports on the TUC Black Workers' Conference

THE ASLEF delegation to this year's conference at Congress House included Paul Patmore, committee secretary, Hussein Ezzedine, from District 2, Trevor Robinson, from District 8, and me (representing District 5). The theme was Confronting Racial Discrimination, Building Stronger Unions, and there were 225 delegates, and 11 observers, from 27 trade unions.

Frances O'Grady, general secretary of the TUC, and Mark Hammond, chief executive of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, addressed conference, and Paul asked a question on apprenticeships and the recruitment of BEM youths.

Neville Lawrence, father of Stephen, victim of a racist murder on the streets of south-east London, gave a passionate and emotional speech about the stop and search law and how mainly young black boys get intimately searched in the street on a regular basis. And how the police bugged his house and had the Lawrence family, rather than Stephen's suspected killers, under surveillance.

There were debates on the immigration bill, discrimination in recruitment and BME apprenticeships. Hussein spoke in support of a motion on BME women in male dominated industries, highlighting our *On Track with Diversity* report and the work ASLEF has done to try and diversify the train driving grade.

Carol Duggan, aunt of Mark Duggan, who was shot dead by police in 2011, spoke about the effect of his death on his family, and asked for help with her fight for justice. A collection at lunchtime raised £254 for the Mark Duggan campaign.

There were workshops on black women and the cuts, deaths in custody, migration and immigration and a charter for anti-racist



ASLEF confronting racial discrimination



education. I attended the deaths in custody workshop. Marcia Rigg and Stephanie Lightfoot Bennett of United Friends and Family said that 980 people died in police custody between 1990 and 2013 and only one case resulted in a conviction. UFF needs donations to help pay legal costs and it would be nice to get branches to set up standing orders of, say, £2 to £5 a month to help. Also to invite them to branch meetings and district councils to tell their stories. They have written to the Prime Minister to get the Independent Police Complaints Commission disbanded as, with police officers on the panel, it is not independent.

Hussein attended the workshop on the impact of austerity cuts on black and minority ethnic women. Women from such backgrounds are disproportionately affected; this relationship between austerity and multiple disadvantage has been overlooked, rarely featuring in public discourse around the cuts.

We had a small panic on Sunday morning

as the FBU, who were meant to second our motion on transport poverty, pulled out at the last minute. But the RMT stepped in. Trevor delivered the motion well and there were speakers in support, including a London bus driver. The motion we voted for to go to Congress was on immigration and I was voted back onto the TUC race relations committee for 2014-15.

QUOTE...

'My job was to disappoint everybody at a rate they could tolerate.' – **Graeme Shaw**, head of TfL's Northern line extension, on drafting Invitations to Tender

...UNQUOTE

Putting the brakes on mega trucks

Freight on Rail welcomed the decision by European transport ministers to reject a European Commission proposal to allow cross border mega trucks in Europe. Philippa Edmunds said: 'International use of mega trucks could result in more fatalities, increased congestion, pollution and road damage as well as undermining rail freight – which is the low carbon, energy efficient and safer alternative. Even the Commission admitted mega trucks are more dangerous than existing lorries. If these enormous trucks had been allowed in international traffic across Europe, they would have come to the UK by default. It just doesn't make sense to allow even bigger lorries when existing ones are driving around partially empty.'

OVERGROUND ON TRACK

Transport for London has appointed LOROL, the London Overground operator, to run local services out of Liverpool Street to north-east London on 'an interim basis'. TfL says the services, currently run by Greater Anglia, need to be improved. A spokesman said: 'Passengers can look forward to seeing staff at all London Overground managed stations while trains are running.' The Overground concession, including these routes, will be re-let from November 2016 after a new bidding round.

FUNDING TRANSPORT

Transport projects in England outside London have been underfunded in recent years, say MPs, 'and this cannot be allowed to continue.' The Select Transport Committee also argued that changes to the way that funding is allocated 'could disadvantage the regions.' Spending per head in the capital is twice that of anywhere else in England and the committee has called for projects that 'benefit all areas.'

Mick Whelan has welcomed news that Crossrail 2 could be opened in 2029 – four years earlier than planned. Mick said: 'Crossrail 2 isn't just good for London, and those people living in London, and commuting into the capital to work, it's good for the whole country. Investment in infrastructure is vital. We need to build a better railway to build a better Britain.'



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Mick makes his point in Westminster

JAMES McGOWAN reports on a meeting with Patrick McLoughlin

A SLEF's general secretary Mick Whelan met Patrick McLoughlin, Secretary of State for Transport and MP for the Derbyshire Dales, along with a delegation of rail unions.

Mick highlighted ASLEF's reservations over the lack of consultation with unions on changes to franchising which could result in cuts to staff and services.

In particular, he expressed concern over possible dilution of TUPE provisions in the course of the refranchising of the East Coast main line and sought an assurance from the Secretary of State that the equivalent of TUPE



Patrick McLoughlin worked at Littleton Colliery in Cannock, and was national chair of the Young Conservatives, before being elected to Staffordshire County Council from 1981 to 1987

would apply. Mr McLoughlin said he would get back to us on this.

Mick also criticised the

Department for Transport's direct award extensions to numerous train operators, drawing attention to the lack of transparency and public oversight in the process, as well as the failure to consult with trade unions. Mr McLoughlin acknowledged the points Mick made.

Other issues discussed included the implications of Network Rail returning to the public sector, the impact of cuts to the Network Rail budget between 2015 and 2019, uncertainty over TUPE for skilled maintenance workers to Thameslink rolling stock provider Siemens, and payment of the living wage in the rail industry.

Men of Harlech, stop your dreaming

EMMA PENMAN reports on the Wales ULR forum

ASLEF's Learning Partnership Programme organised a training and development forum for Welsh union learning reps in Cardiff. ULRs from Arriva Trains Wales and First Great Western, representing all four rail unions, attended. The objective was to provide useful practical knowledge to help the ULRs carry out their role effectively. The reps took part in a Learning through Sport initiative, gaining knowledge from the experiences of ex-Premiership footballer Matt Jones, who played for Leeds United, Leicester City and Llanelli, and was capped 13 times for Wales. He gave a candid talk on the highs and lows of his career and told how he picked himself up after a career-ending injury. There were workshops



Former footballer Matt Jones (right) joined ULRs to talk about Learning through Sport

on online learning provisions, essential skills, and IT literacy and numeracy in the workplace. This forum was the first time all the ULRs had been able to get together and provided a perfect opportunity for networking and planning future activities.



Nick Whitehead, District 4 Organiser, underlined the point that, as it says on the banner behind him, Unity is Strength, when he shared a platform with Unite and Unison at a Workers' Memorial Day rally in Sheffield.

Show these cuts the red card

ASLEF education project worker ALAN REID reveals how an anti-racism charity backed by ASLEF has had its funding slashed by the SNP

Show Racism the Red Card Scotland is facing a funding shortfall just when its brand of national campaigning, combined with grassroots education, is needed most.

It was set up in 2003 as the Scottish office of the UK-wide educational charity to combat racism and sectarianism by using the popularity of football to engage with young people and adults.

The charity receives funding through the Scottish government's Equality Unit and Safer Communities but SNP austerity measures mean funds provided have been reduced from £120,000 in 2011-12 to £40,000 in 2014-15.

The project, which uses ex-professional players to promote its message, managed to work with 13,369 people last year,

including a number of ASLEF members (and I sit on the Scottish Advisory Group). But the reality is that reduced core support from the Scottish government translates into less education against prejudicial attitudes and behaviour. The organisation is calling for your support in campaigning against the cuts.

Please contact Vicki Burns, campaign manager, to sign the petition at campaign@theredcardscotland.org

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ET AND A STUDENT?

Many of us know Ian Allan, the publishing house founded in 1942 by an ambitious young man working in Southern Railway's PR department at Waterloo station – his first book was the *ABC of Southern Locomotives* – as a specialist publisher of books about trains, buses and other forms of public transport. Ian Allen – different spelling – is an author from Staffordshire who has compiled *Grumpy Old Git Jokes* (Portico Books, £9.99). Sample: Why is watching Channel 5 like cooking a rare steak? After two minutes you have to turn it over! Boom! Boom! Sample: What's the difference between your son or daughter at university and ET? ET phoned home! Boom! Boom!



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Free Palestine



JAMAL AJJANE,
former Feltham
Electric branch
secretary, reports
from Solidarity with
Palestine at the TUC

Solidarity with Palestine, a trade union conference organised by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign with the support of the TUC, was held at Congress House in London to build support for a free and independent Palestine. More than 70 delegates from 15 trade unions attended. Brian Corbett, now District 7 Organiser, Andrew Hudd, of Bristol branch, James McGowan, head of policy and comms, Katy Procter, our conference organiser and website editor, and I represented ASLEF.

This year, 2014, has been declared a year of international solidarity with the Palestinian

people by the United Nations in recognition of the continuing denial of Palestinian human rights, and the growing opposition to occupation, injustice, racism and apartheid.

After an introduction by Mohammad Taj, the TUC president, we heard from Palestinian representatives; about the situation in Gaza from Rania Khalil, and the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign from Omar Barghouti of the Palestinian National Boycott Committee via a Skype link. We also heard from Eamon McMahon of Trade Union Friends of Palestine (Ireland), Steve Bell of the CWU and Sean Bamford of the TUC who had just returned from Palestine.

There were working sessions, sharing ideas for practical solidarity – James McGowan spoke on building solidarity from a delegation – and conference also heard from Abed Dari, a Jericho fieldworker for Kav LaOved, which protects the rights of disadvantaged workers – doing very long hours for very little pay – in Israel and the occupied territories.

In his closing remarks Hugh Lanning, PSC chair, focused on the need to share information and resources to increase the effectiveness of our campaign to raise awareness and bring the forward the day



Andrew Hudd, Jamal Ajjane and Brian Corbett (above) show Solidarity with Palestine

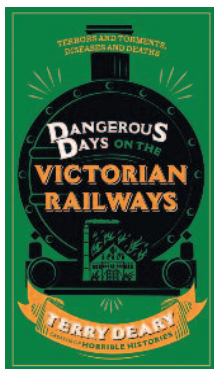


when the siege of Gaza is ended and Palestine is free. We hope to encourage more branches and individual members to affiliate and get involved because through the PSC we are attempting to build closer working relationships in our campaign for a better world and justice for Palestine.

Rocket up the railway

Terry Deary was an actor, director and drama teacher before turning his hand to writing books for children – he's knocked out a couple of hundred of the things – hitting paydirt with the *Horrible Histories* series. At the end of last year he started writing gobbet-size history books for adults in a new series

called *Dangerous Days*. The second volume, just published, *Dangerous Days on the Victorian Railways* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £9.99) is described by the author (who loves a little alliteration) as 'a history of the terrors and the torments; the dirt, diseases and deaths; the feuds, frauds, robberies and riots, suffered by our ancestors.' And so it is. Deary has a team of researchers who dig up facts and figures



from old newspapers; he turns them into anecdotes and stories, often with a raised eyebrow or a twist of his upper lip. There's lots of good stuff, such as this nugget in a section titled *Rainhill, Rocket and Ruthlessness*: 'George Stephenson's *Rocket* had a glorious youth, a humiliating middle life and an honoured and eternal old age' attributed to Ada Louise Barrett (1849-83).

QUOTE...

'Safety laws are not needless red tape, nor part of the jobsworth culture. They provide valuable protection for the UK's 30 million workers. There is no evidence that our safety laws prevent anyone from acting heroically when someone's life is threatened.' – **Frances O'Grady, general secretary of the TUC**

...UNQUOTE



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Calendar kids

SHIRLEY HANDSLEY, education project co-ordinator, reports on an education project developing nicely

Two years ago union learning rep Tony Paul helped organise a digital photography course for East Coast staff at Newcastle. This led to a competition and the best 12 entries were used on a calendar designed by Tony and ULRs from the TSSA and the RMT. The 2013 calendar, privately printed, made £2,500 for Railway Children, a charity which fights for vulnerable kids who live on the streets.

As a result, East Coast agreed to pay for the professional design and printing of a 2014 calendar with the ULRs organising a further competition for entries. This year's

calendar raised a staggering £5,243 and Karen Boswell, East Coast managing director, presented a cheque for that sum to the Railway Children at Newcastle Central, watched by the ULRs and their colleagues whose photos appear in the calendar.

Tony Paul said: 'It's great to see how well ASLEF can work in partnership with East Coast to make so much money for such a wonderful cause. These children find themselves living on the streets because there is nowhere else to go and no one left to turn to.'



Bob Howes (East Coast driver manager), Karen Boswell, Mike Tansey (ASLEF education), Susanne Parsons (Railway Children) and Tony Paul

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ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

Under the provisions of Section 32A of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 ASLEF is obliged to provide members with a statement summarising its financial affairs.

Income and expenditure

	£
Total income	6,556,509
Total expenditure	5,114,047

£5,249,327 of total income comprised payments in respect of membership.

Political Income and Expenditure

The figures above include £130,103 income and £138,717 expenditure in respect of the political fund.

Salaries and Benefits

	Salary	Employer's National Insurance contributions	Pension contributions	Total
	£	£	£	£
M Whelan, General Secretary	87,264	9,815	21,118	118,197
A Donnelly, President	17,087	585		17,672

Executive Committee

H Bradley	32,824	3,288		36,112
D Calfe	11,147	191		11,338
M Colombini	36,618	3,815		40,433
B Corbett	31,286	2,984		34,270
H Kaye	34,891	3,547		38,438
T McDonald	31,262	2,719		33,981
T Wilkinson	29,366	1,233		30,599

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ASLEF

We have audited the financial statements of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) for the year ended 31 December 2013 which comprise the income and expenditure account, the balance sheet and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the union's members, as a body, in accordance with Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the union's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the union and the union's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND AUDITORS

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Executive Committee's Responsibilities, ASLEF's executive committee are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

SCOPE OF THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the union's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by ASLEF's executive committee; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the General Secretary's report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

OPINION ON FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of ASLEF's affairs as at 31 December 2013 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the union has not maintained a satisfactory system of control over its transactions in accordance with the requirements of that section; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures within the form AR21 of Officers' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Chantrey Vellacott DFK LLP,
Chartered Accountants, Statutory Auditor
LONDON,
13 March 2014

IRREGULARITY STATEMENT

Under Section 32A(6a) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 we are obliged to publish the following statement. A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring or has occurred in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and if necessary securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with; the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of the rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice.

Why do we need a political fund?



Every member of ASLEF will have the chance to vote in a ballot on our political fund later this month. MICK WHELAN explains why this fund is vital for our union

THE political fund allows ASLEF to lawfully campaign in the political arena. It allows us to take a stand on the most important issues facing our members – such as supporting a publicly-owned railway and defending our pensions. With legislation coming at us from Westminster, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Brussels we need a strong voice to act on behalf of our members. So we use our political fund to lobby MPs, MSPs, AMs and MEPs on the impact of national policies and we use it to support ASLEF members who are district and county councillors working at local and community level.

THE FUND: THE FACTS

The political fund is not a piggy bank for the Labour Party. It simply ensures that this union stays within the law when we are campaigning on political issues. It does not matter where you live or how you vote in elections, the law requires ASLEF to have a political fund if it is to speak up on political matters. Before 1913 political action by trade unions was unlawful. Remember – without political action by unions we would not have been able to fight for – and win – the political freedoms we enjoy today.

WHAT DO WE USE THE FUND FOR?

Our political fund pays for the production and distribution of campaign materials. It allows us to campaign for – or against – a political policy, and the direction or manifesto of a political party, and allows us to expose political attacks on workers. We use it to advertise in support of, or against, a particular policy. And we use it for

QUOTE...

'We still face threats from Europe, from Brussels and Strasbourg, over the 4th railway package, which hasn't yet gone away, driver licensing, and mega trucks, and, without the political fund, we will not be able to fight, or influence, any of these.' – **Simon Weller, national organiser**

...UNQUOTE



The political fund, which Mrs Thatcher (far right) wanted to abolish, allows us to campaign on issues which affect all our members as part of Action for Rail (below) and in Strasbourg (right)



QUOTE...

'Every time we have asked, members have said Yes. Why? Because the political fund isn't about financing Labour. It covers a broad range of campaigning activity and, without it, we would face costly legal action if we dared to speak up for our members.' – **Marz Colombini, EC member District 1**

...UNQUOTE

expenditure on voter registration – which we need to ensure working people keep their right to vote.

CAMPAIGNS FOR MEMBERS

Without a political fund we would have been unable to campaign on many issues that have a direct impact on our members. Campaigns such as *Freight on Rail*; *Mail on Rail*; *Action for Rail*; the *Squash* campaign for a decent driving environment; the *Better Rail* campaign, *Keep East Coast on Track*; *Drive Down the Hours*; and our recent successful campaign to force the Conservative-Lib Dem coalition to drop plans to abolish the protection granted on our pensions at the time of privatisation. We have only been able to run all these campaigns because we have a political fund.

PLEASE VOTE YES

I urge you to vote Yes in our political fund ballot. Over the last ten years the political fund

has been used to support ASLEF's campaigning work against rail privatisation and for more freight on rail as well as broader campaigns against the privatisation of public services, cuts and austerity measures. It has been used to stand up to government attacks on employment rights and workplace protection; to oppose racist and xenophobic right-wing groups; to promote equality in Britain; to support HS2; to oppose the European 4th railway package; and to voice our solidarity with international campaigns.

QUOTE...

'ASLEF members are being asked to vote in a secret postal ballot. I urge you to participate and I urge you to vote 'Yes'. Because this union isn't just about what happens in the workplace. It's about making Britain a better place to live, through the collective view of working people.' – **Tosh McDonald, vice-president**

...UNQUOTE

○ The Trade Union Act of 1984, brought in by the virulently anti-union Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher, requires every trade union to ballot its members every ten years about whether it should have a political fund to campaign on behalf of its members.



Should Scotland end the union?

YES



says NIALL CAMPBELL of our Yoker branch



With 'Scotland the Brave' emblazoned on the cover of January's *Journal*, I was greeted by Neil Findlay, Labour MSP for Lothian, who also sits for

Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley on West Lothian Council, accusing the SNP of leading us to neo-liberal orthodoxy and wanting a class-based system that Scotland does not believe in.

We have traditionally believed we are all equal and everyone is the same. I support independence fully, and have done all my working career. This does not make me a CyberNat nor anti-ASLEF or trade unions. I see the arguments from a wide spectrum of political beliefs and have supported campaigns for rural areas against local authorities manipulating facts and figures to distort the truth.

MICONCEPTIONS AND FACTS

It all starts with the Act of Union 1707, allowing a political union of Scotland and England whilst keeping the sovereign states of both countries in its laws, religions, etc. Whilst right-wing media papers have, over the years, played on Scotland being a subsidy junkie, we should step back collectively and refute that claim which is, sadly, ingrained in belief.

Scotland has just 2% extra reliance on benefits than England, so we are not the subsidy junkies portrayed by the Better Together campaign; and we produce 99% of taxes in line with London and the south-east of England before oil revenue is added, a justification that we are equal political partners with the ability to stand on our own two feet without oil.

We as a sovereign nation are willing to take on our share of debt, taking on the share of assets like the NHS, HM forces, railway infrastructure, etc.

STATE OF SCOTS POLITICS

Where I moot is the talent within Scottish Labour to take on First Minister Questions in the Scottish Parliament without a prepared speech? Scottish Labour were powerless to have a separate policy

against the bedroom tax up here. It seems that Scottish Labour is split in Scotland in delivering a land forever free forever more from Tory elitism, building a fairer and socially aware society, taking us collectively out of poverty, not leaving anybody behind.

We look at the Lib Dems for an alternative and look how they voted for tuition fees, military involvement in Syria, and the much hated bedroom tax. That just leaves the SNP with, so far, good and credible fiscal autonomy and delivering sustainable policies.

HAVE WE LOST PATIENCE?

Are we now at a point in our history that Scotland has simply had enough of the empty promises from Westminster, had enough of Blue Labour policies to have any credible chance of gaining power in England? Have we had enough of Tories wanting to take us out of the EU, just as Better Together, ironically, claims we cannot join; with the rise of UKIP gaining strength. Just more of the same negative campaigning we see, with people saying a Yes vote is supporting Alex Salmond while forgetting a No vote is for David Cameron using the same methodology.

ASLEF AND SOCIAL AWARENESS

Aneurin Bevan famously said: 'There is only one hope for mankind and that is democratic socialism.' Has ASLEF in Scotland discarded that with a minority deciding on a policy of the most monumental consequence, not just for this generation of its members but for decades to follow? With respect to Tom Burns, if others had remembered and trusted one member, one vote we would have gone forward together collectively.

RAILWAY RENATIONALISATION

We have to ask ourselves if ASLEF did itself an injustice by forgetting about United with Labour, Labour for Independence, and asking the silent majority in Scotland if they supported independence; or perhaps stayed out of the whole debate.

Where is the social experience leading us with more of the same, with the SNP hinting for years on railway re-nationalisation, not us pleading with Scottish Labour to include it in their mandate; are we missing the obvious that independence can deliver what we want?

A reasoned debate, and hearing from Labour for Indy, is what most of us would like to see, as George Osborne announces £29 billion of cuts; or are we going to agree to more of the same?



NO



says TOM BURNS an activist in our Perth branch



The question before voters on Thursday 18 September will be: 'Should Scotland be an independent country?' That wording is crucial because, for two years, the SNP/Yes campaign has been suggesting that the question is: 'Could Scotland be an independent country?'

The *Journal* has printed two pieces from me on the subject of the referendum. In May 2012 I questioned the basis of the exercise, suggesting that anti-English sentiment is at the root of much of the discontent. In September 2013 I wondered why the SNP/Yes campaign has failed to come up with answers to the questions being asked about the claimed benefits of independence.

Since then SNP/Yes has produced a paper, *Scotland's Future*, which – we are told – answers those questions, and is the most comprehensive blueprint for any nation to become independent. Ever. SNP/Yes challenged the pro-union alliance to produce answers of its own, claiming it was impossible to make a positive case for the continuation of the United Kingdom.

And when the answers came – from the UK government, and opposition, the Bank of England, the presidents of the EU Council and



Commission, the Prime Minister of Spain, the President of France, the CBI, FSB, and professional bodies like the Institute of Chartered Accountants Scotland – SNP/Yes didn't like it one little bit, calling it scaremongering, bullying and bluster, and denying flatly every point raised.

This leaves us, with just a few weeks to go until polling day, with a polarized debate. Train drivers are constantly reminded to react to what they see, not what they think they see or might want to see. And it is useful to look at the facts as we know them to help decide which way to vote.

On the vital issue of our currency the facts are these: SNP/Yes asserts that a formal currency union with the rest of the UK is in the best interests of both countries (like the euro). HM Treasury and both opposition parties have categorically ruled out this option. The Bank of England governor was careful to stress he would obey the government of the day – and we know what they will tell him. **In train driving terms, this is a red signal.**

On membership of the EU, SNP/Yes asserts that Scotland will automatically retain its place as a member of the EU, but will retain sterling and various treaty opt-outs, allowing a competitive advantage. Both Herman van Rompuy and José Manuel Barroso, presidents of the European Council and Commission respectively, have stated categorically this is wrong. If Scotland leaves the UK, it automatically leaves the EU, and would have to apply for membership from scratch. This would mean adopting both the euro and the Schengen treaty on fully open borders, as these are preconditions of EU membership. It

would mean an indeterminate delay, as Spain, France and others would object for reasons of their own. **In train driving terms, this is a red signal.**

The SNP/Yes campaign asserts that jobs will be created and there will be faster growth in the Scottish economy if they are given control of the 'economic levers'. But we know that at least 12,000 high skilled, high wage jobs will disappear from shipbuilding and defence if Scotland votes Yes. This has been confirmed by management and unions at BAE Systems on the Clyde. The full knock-on effects are unknown, but it seems improbable that the education and service sectors would emerge unscathed from such a massive blow. **In train driving terms, this is a red signal.**

SNP/Yes asserts that pensions will be guaranteed by 'triple lock' protection. But every existing scheme, based in London, will become an overseas pension in Scotland and subject to higher contributions. **In train driving terms, this is a red signal.**

SNP/Yes says an oil fund will be established to provide Scotland with a Norwegian-style welfare system. But the value of oil revenues fell by £4.4 billion last year alone, which means oil revenues are being used to plug today's budget deficit. **In train driving terms, this is a red signal.**

SNP/Yes asserts that Scotland is a more equal society, and voting Yes will guarantee a socialist future. The tax proposals in the white paper promise corporation tax will always be 3% lower in Scotland than in the UK, air transport duty will be reduced and

personal taxation will never be higher than in the UK. This can only benefit the rich. There is no explanation as to how the wealth gap is to be narrowed and no explanation as to how poverty, unemployment and chronic ill health will be reduced. **In train driving terms, this is a red signal.**

SNP/Yes says that – if nothing else – a Yes vote guarantees Scots will always get the government they vote for. In 2011, the turnout at the Scottish Parliament election was 50.4% of which approximately 40% voted SNP. So, in reality, the SNP's landslide is no more the voice of the people than was Margaret Thatcher's. The reality is that Scotland is ruled by the largest minority, just like the rest of the UK. SNP/Yes says Scotland is so different politically it must separate. The European election in May saw UKIP win its first seat at any election in Scotland, and a 62% to 38% majority of votes going to unionist parties. **In train driving terms, this is a red signal.**

As train drivers, when we are presented with a series of red signals do we stop and think about it – or do we decide that what we are seeing is wrong, that we know best and carry on regardless? Do we say to ourselves, the signaller is bluffing; he's trying to bully me, the signal should be green and I'll continue anyway? Of course not!

Scots should vote No on 18 September because Scots recognise that Scotland is better in the UK and the UK is better with Scotland.

ACTS OF UNION

The crowns of England and Scotland were united in 1603 when James VI of Scotland became James I of England but, politically, the two countries were not united until the Act of Union of 1707 created the United Kingdom of Great Britain. The Act of Union of 1801 created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland which, in 1922, became the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Struggle and solidarity



In a trenchant call to arms
STEVEN NIMMO,
an activist in
Edinburgh No 2
branch, says train drivers
are in the vanguard of the
trade union movement

WE USE the word 'solidarity' a lot in the trade union movement but what does it really mean? The *Oxford English Dictionary* says: 'Unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support within a group.' Solidarity for trade unionists is a potent weapon in the battle with the oppressive classes and an affirmation of the strength and vitality of our organisations. It is the notion that most strikes fear into the hearts of those who would destroy our terms and conditions, workplaces and communities.

Historically, solidarity has manifested itself in various guises. In 1915 a rent strike in Glasgow, largely organised by women, saw the physical prevention of evictions. Later that year, when factors went to court to sue their tenants, they were met with a munition workers' strike and 10,000 protesters outside the courthouse and the case wasn't heard!

TACTICS OF THE RULING CLASS

In 1919 workers in Limerick went on strike, essentially against curtailment of their civil liberties. This led to the establishment of the Limerick Soviet, and the solidarity shown between workers and occupying soldiers led to one Scottish regiment being sent home for fear they would mutiny! Just prior to this a strike by engineers in Belfast was supported by 40,000 workers, both Protestants and Catholics. At the same time, in Glasgow, tanks and soldiers were put on the streets to quell the movement for a shorter working week. The state, in fear of a popular uprising, confined local troops to Maryhill barracks. The fear of solidarity always drives the tactics of the ruling class.

Solidarity can take other forms, such as the embargo of apartheid South Africa, consumer boycotts of Israeli goods or insisting on only having Havana Club in your mojito. Charity events like *Live Aid* or *Comic Relief* are also examples of people showing support for fellow human beings.



Sport, too, has been a vehicle for solidarity, from Muhammad Ali's support for the civil rights movement, and Bill Shankly's famous vision of a football team as a microcosm of socialism, to the black power salutes by Tommie Smith and John Carlos at the Mexico Olympics in 1968 and Robbie Fowler's public support of the Liverpool dockers in the 1990s.

The absolute support shown between the miners and their communities during the 1984-85 miners' strike was an act of Herculean solidarity, and our union refused to move scab coal, but the miners suffered from a general failure of trade unions to broaden the strike as well as the state's experience in dealing with dissent and revolt.

ACTS OF SOLIDARITY

A series of reversals for the working-class since then has led to a downturn in confidence which, allied to repressive anti-union laws, such as the banning of secondary picketing and more frequent use of the courts by employers to challenge ballot results, means fewer open acts of solidarity than we saw in the past.

Ask yourself if, 30 or 40 years ago, one obscenely wealthy man had, from his yacht in the Caribbean, threatened to close such an economically vital workplace as Grangemouth, would the trade union movement have stood by and watched or would there have been action and a clamour for nationalisation?

The bosses want to divide and rule. In our own industry privatisation has led to the fragmentation of the railway into myriad

companies which means that if a driver in London is mistreated drivers elsewhere are unable, legally, to participate in action to defend that driver. This fragmentation has allowed a situation to develop where two drivers working out of the same main line station can have a pay disparity of £12,000.

As someone who is relatively new to the railway I've been surprised at the differences in agreements across depots, which undermine collective bargaining and our ability to act as a coherent force to effect change in the workplace.

TRADITIONS OF STRUGGLE

How can we address the obstacles put in our way? I think we need to rediscover our traditions of struggle and solidarity. Recent articles in our *Journal* about the miners' strike are a great example, because too often our history is told through the pages of the Tory press. Branches could invite speakers to meetings to highlight current and historical campaigns. Lines of communication between unions could be strengthened through participation in local trades councils, inviting striking workers to discuss their situation and what practical solidarity we can give.

Trade unions should campaign, politically, for the repeal of all anti-union legislation because this is the biggest impediment to effective solidarity and the attitude of the political class, of all persuasions, will speak volumes! And there are questions all trade unionists should be asking about acts of solidarity that don't involve secondary action. An example could be, say, a national firefighters' strike. Should we be driving trains knowing there are no emergency services in the event of an accident? For me, these are health and safety issues that allow us to show practical solidarity!

In ASLEF we are in a very good position in that we still hold a lot of power in our workplaces which we use for the benefit of our members. I believe this puts us in a position at the forefront of a revival in active solidarity to campaign for workers' rights and social change.

REVOLUTIONARY SOLIDARITY



Protected conversations – protection for whom?



IAIN BIRRELL of Thompsons solicitors reveals what recently introduced provisions allowing employers to hold protected conversations with employees could mean for you

PROVISIONS have now come into effect which allow employers to talk to workers off the record to try and arrange settlement agreements. These are known as 'protected conversations' and represent yet a further shift in the balance of power from staff to employers. It is vital, therefore, that workers are aware of the new provisions and the impact they could have on them.

The Conservative-led coalition government's reasoning for introducing these new provisions was that business wanted to be able to talk to their staff about sensitive employment issues, such as retirement and maternity leave, but were worried to do so in case the details of what they said resulted in legal claims being made against them.

To help their friends in business this government decided it was all too legally daunting for employers to handle and that they needed special protection from their workers.

WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Before the introduction of protected conversations, employers could speak to their staff without prejudice and the conversation or statement could not be disclosed as evidence in an employment tribunal or court. However, to be legal, the conversation had to be as part of negotiations for any settlement agreement and only applied when there was a genuine attempt to settle an existing dispute. If there was no dispute, then the conversation could not be held to be without prejudice.

The provisions for protected conversations remove this

requirement for there to be an existing dispute. An employer can now hold a conversation with a worker, about sensitive and important employment issues, safe in the knowledge that the details will be withheld from any ordinary unfair dismissal tribunal. In short, the change removes vital protections from the worker and shifts the balance of power even further in favour of the employer.

The new provisions are particularly damaging to workers wishing to pursue a case of constructive dismissal. An employer could hold a conversation with a worker on a sensitive employment issue which has the effect of destroying the working relationship and leads to the worker opting to resign – and yet the crucial conversation could not be used as evidence in an employment tribunal.

CRUCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Of course, while most employers will not abuse the new provisions, there will, unfortunately, be many employers who do.

Thankfully, while there is plenty in the new arrangements that employers can potentially abuse, some crucial safeguards for employees are still in place.

Conversations cannot be protected, and therefore kept out of a tribunal, where they relate to discrimination and some forms of unfair dismissal. Moreover, there are numerous pitfalls for employers when attempting to make a settlement agreement. An employer can easily find themselves unprotected if there is impropriety or where procedures are not followed correctly. ACAS has produced *Settlement Agreements: A Guide* which lists various examples of what might



HM Courts & Tribunals Service



be deemed improper behaviour by employers. For example, an employer putting undue pressure on a health care manager to sign an agreement would be regarded as improper behaviour. As a general rule, it is suggested that ten calendar days should be allowed for an employee to consider the terms of an agreement, unless it is agreed otherwise.

CONTACT YOUR UNION REP

In addition, all forms of harassment, discrimination and victimisation are listed as inappropriate behaviour in the process of confirming a settlement agreement. It is

important to note, however, that whether or not the employer has acted improperly will always be for the employment tribunal to decide.

If you are approached by your employer regarding a settlement agreement, you are advised to contact your union representative immediately for support and advice on the process – especially if you believe that your employer might have acted inappropriately.

Iain Birrell is the regional employments rights manager at Thompsons solicitors in Newcastle and a member of the firm's trade union law group

State of the union

The General, Mick Whelan, RMS national secretary Tony West, and committee members Alan Taylor and PJ Smith were invited to Didcot to celebrate their 125th anniversary and 40th reunion. District Officer Brian Corbett and his wife Bev, branch secretary Nigel Mack, and reunion organisers Alvin Evans, Tony



Tony West, Brian and Bev Corbett, Alvin Evans, Tony Lyford, Tony Neil and Mick Whelan at the GWRSA Club

Lyford and Tony Neil welcomed us while the General and Tony gave up to date presentations on the state of the union. A presentation of the hard stuff, to keep them warm on a cold

night, was made to Reg Warr, 94, Owen Evans, 75, and Dave Aldredge, 70, while Brian Daniels got his 40 year badge and Tracy Whitbread got her 20 year badge. **Peter Smith, RMS**



Hugh Bradley, EC member for District 2, presented long service badges to Glasgow branch members who have amassed more than 200 years in the union. We also said farewell to retired member John Barry, who has been in the railway for over 30 years, and is now embarking on a three month tour of Europe. John McCue, branch secretary



The May meeting of Bishop's Stortford branch, at the Half Moon, was well-attended, boosted by the presence of our District Organiser, Nigel Gibson, and EC member Howard Kaye. Business was dealt with briskly and followed by a few words from Nigel and Howard who then presented service badges to Bros Frank Boyle, Richard Roscoe and Dave Aldous, and a service award to our former H&S rep, Bro John Bone, in recognition for his eight years in the post. **Richard Roscoe, branch secretary**

Good luck, Chris



Marz Colombini, EC member District 1, presents Chris with his retirement certificate

Grove Park branch met to celebrate the retirement of Brother Chris Francis after 42 years on the railway, rising from junior railman to the footplate as driver, then driver instructor, squeezing in a spell as company council rep. Good luck Chris – and welcome to the Retired Members' Section!

Ray Garland, Grove Park

○ Please send your branch news to journal@aslef.org.uk

Upcoming events

○ TONBRIDGE – THURSDAY 3 JULY

Southeastern retired members' reunion from 11.00 at the Royal British Legion, 26 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent.

○ NORTHAMPTON – SATURDAY 16 AUGUST

Informal gathering from 16.00 at the Old Black Lion, across the road from the station, to commemorate 20 years since the closure of Northampton BR train crew depot. All welcome! Come along and reminisce about one of the finest train crew depots there ever was. Cold buffet provided. Details from Graham Croucher on 07841 678018.

○ RAINHAM – THURSDAY 2 OCTOBER

Southeastern retired members' reunion from 11.00 at Rainham Social Club, 86 Station Rd, Rainham, Kent.

○ MARYLEBONE – FRIDAY 10 OCTOBER

Anyone associated with Marylebone branch – past or present – welcome at our annual reunion from 17.00 at the Thornbury. Details from R Gordon-Hill on 07956 025551.

Stan and Brian

St Blazey branch was honoured to have our recently elected District 7 Officer Brian Corbett in attendance. He told us about his new role and the challenges he faces, including Crossrail, Transport for London amalgamation and FGW negotiations for driver step by step integration, and then presented a 25 year membership badge to Brother Brian

Martin, FGW Par depot, who started on the railway in 1980 as a senior railwayman at Liskeard, became a guard at Plymouth, moved to Aylesbury in 1989 to get a driver's job, coming back to St Blazey in 1994. The branch recorded its thanks to the old DO, Stan Moran, who worked with previous branch secretaries to help support the FGW Par



Brian Martin receives his 25 year badge from Brian Corbett

and DBS St Blazey depots; which was, at times, a challenging and thankless task. Stan, we thank you for all your efforts, which were never in vain.

Jonathan Beale, St Blazey



York 243 branch welcomed general secretary Mick Whelan, District 3 Organiser Colin Smith, District 4 Organiser Nick Whitehead and EC vice-president Tosh McDonald to a double celebration – the branch's 130th birthday and the retired drivers' reunion. The GS presented 50 year badges to A Penn, K Watson, C Duckles, B Wallace, J O'Conner, F Coupland, E Jankowski, N Hitch and D Taylor. Here's to the next 130 years! Graham Hilton, branch chair



A well attended Woking branch was lucky enough to receive as guests the general secretary, Mick Whelan, District 1 EC member Marz Colombini and Howard Kaye,

EC member for District 5. We were given an excellent rundown by the GS regarding the current state of the railway, up and down the UK, the battles and negotiations

being undertaken by our officers on our behalf, particularly on the Railway Pension Scheme, and the current round of re-franchising and the ramifications for members if left unchallenged by our trade union. Mick and Marz presented long service badges to Mick Berg (20 years), Chris Smith and Colin Watkins (15) and Tom Light (5).

Mick Berg, branch secretary



Behind the scenes

We had the pleasure of welcoming Mick Whelan and the newly elected District 7 Organiser Brian Corbett to a very successful Marylebone branch meeting. We heard about the latest developments within ASLEF and the

Mick presents service badges to Clive Lowther (20 years), Gary Bunney (30), Paul Herbert and Steve Roast (35)

challenges we face as a union. It was really interesting to hear about all the many things going on behind the scenes.

Patrick Houghton, Marylebone



Cheque mate: Mick Jenkins, Nigel Gibson and Dave Lake

At our June branch meeting Cambridge was pleased to have as guests District 5 Organiser Nigel Gibson and CrossCountry reps Dave Sullivan, John Hay, Miles Bidgood,

Outstanding gesture

Eamon Teague and Jim Ball. A good meeting saw discussions about social media, accommodation issues, seniority lists, and the design and purchase of our first union banner for the branch. ASLEF badges were presented by Nigel to Lee McAllister (40 years), Chris Carey (15) and Luke Bensley (5). The branch was delighted to accept a donation from retired driver Dave Lake.

Dave has moved to Cromer but still takes the time to travel each couple of months to Cambridge to attend the branch meeting. On behalf of all our members and the drivers this will help through the welfare fund, I would like to thank Dave for this outstanding gesture and welcome him to many more meetings to join our resident RMS members Andy Gates and Peter Cornwall. Our next meeting is Monday 4 August.

Martin Haylett, branch secretary



Alan Dickson, Dollands Moor branch, receiving his 35 year badge from company council chair Nigel Roebuck and Nick Sandu, company council



This land's the place I love

The Merseyside reunion took place at Tess Riley's in Liverpool city centre on 30 May. Ex- and serving railwaymen mixing together like we were in the mess room – but with a few beers. As the night went on the circulation of stories old and new grew. Memories of British Rail days never cease to amuse! Everyone enjoyed it and already we have plans for a repeat next year.

Chris Todd, Peter Bracken and Steve Maloney

Nigel Brown of Knottingley branch gets his 35 year badge from company council chair Nigel Roebuck



Mick Holder looks at the Journal in July 1914 on the eve of the Great War

BUSINESS AS USUAL

It was business as usual as tensions grew between the Great Powers in Europe. The *Locomotive Journal* reported that, at the Society's annual conference, 'generally, the delegates represented a high standard intellectually, and the conference was, perhaps, the most serious minded in the history of the Society, apart from those responsible for its inception.'

SUBSTITUTE FOR STEAM

'The adoption of electricity as a substitute for steam was one conference could not treat lightly. Men attracted by the locomotive, who had years of service in the lower grades, were going to be denied their right to the front end of the train.'

STRIKE-BREAKING SOLDIERS

'During the recent strikes and rumours of strikes, the engagement of soldiers to work our railways has been mentioned, and an event during the week our conference was sitting shows this is not a question to be lightly treated. The North Eastern Railway Company, according to press reports, have had soldiers engaged in railway construction. It clearly indicates the intentions of the government, Liberal though it is supposed to be, to deal severely with the next railway strike.'

FUSION WITH THE NUR

There was much heated comment on 'fusion' with the NUR. 'Federation, not amalgamation, has always proved the most successful way of dealing with this problem.'

CITIZEN CANED

On a debate about the new *Daily Citizen* the *Journal* says: 'What has been termed the workers' own paper was severely criticised, and we must confess it was not altogether undeserved. Some of our Liverpool and London branches have a very strong case against the editor. The majority of the conference decided that a case had been made against the paper.'

COMPETENT PILOTMEN

'There has been a tendency on the part of some companies to vary the old practice of using drivers only for the purpose of piloting men over strange roads. The delegates gave an emphatic declaration that it must be a pilot driver.'

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Wendy Hurst, Secretary of ASLEF's women's committee

RON ALDRIDGE KNICKERS



Former Stonebridge Park driver Ronald Aldridge sadly passed away on 14 May.

Ron started on the railway as a van boy in the early 1950s before moving to Willesden steam shed; when that closed he moved to the new depot at Stonebridge Park where he stayed until retirement.

Ron – many people referred to him by his nickname Knickers – was one of the depot characters who made Stonebridge such a memorable place to work. Everyone will remember him in his overalls, with his shirt underneath completely unbuttoned and his donkey jacket slung over his shoulder, even when it was winter, and everyone else was wrapped up.

Ron was a very good goalkeeper – the Lev they used to call him! – and played footie and cricket into his 50s with other

Stonebridge staff; he was young at heart and fit and as enthusiastic and agile as the younger players.

He is now reunited with his beloved wife Sheila.

Les Collings, Aylesbury

BILL VENABLES VEGETABLES

With the death of Bill 'Vegetables' Venable at the age of 90 Stockport has lost one of its few remaining World War Two railway servants. Born in 1923, Bill entered footplate service in May 1941 'under the viaduct' at the joint LMS/LNE(CLC) motive power depot at Heaton Mersey. Stockport, with two depots, several marshalling yards, and the strategically important viaduct was a regular target for enemy aircraft.

Bill moved to Trafford Park, Manchester, the depot supplying, along with Kentish Town, men and machines for the St Pancras-Manchester Central scenic route through the Peak District. With the electrification of the WCML, by the end of the 1960s Bill's route and depot had gone, and he found himself working out of Piccadilly to Euston, over the viaduct this time! He worked the Wessy until his retirement in 1988, just short of 47 years' service.

He was a bird watcher, stargazer, and family man, holidaying with his kids in Cornwall by rail on a free pass.

Bill was carried into the chapel on the shoulders of four retired BR train drivers, including two of his former Trafford Park firemen, attended by his widow, children and grandchildren.

Mel Thorley, Longsight (retired)

DAVID THOMAS DAI BROC

David Charles Rhys Thomas, known to all who had the pleasure of meeting this gentlest of men, as Dai Broc, passed away peacefully at the age of 73 on 26 February after contracting cancer, which he bore with courage and dignity.

I first met Dai, who had moved from Burry Port depot, when we were both firemen at Llanelli in the 1960s, and he later spent time at Southall and Pantyffynnon, ending up at Swansea High Street.

Dai loved his job, he was a railwayman through and through, and he hated having to take early retirement, because of a fatality, just short of 50 years' service. He loved his cup of tea, and roll up cigarettes, was a good gardener, coming from farming stock, loved his family, and liked his outings once a month with the Retired Members' Section in Swansea, better known as the Jolly Boys. To his wife Sandra, daughters Andrea and Catherine, and all his families, our deepest sympathy.

John Rossiter, Swansea

ALAN FODEN BROTHER IN ARMS

Alan Foden, one of five Foden brothers, who all started their footplate careers at Newton Heath loco, has died at 87. Alan joined the railway in January 1946, moved to Manchester Victoria 39 years later and retired in 1990. A real Mancunian and fine colleague.

S Black, Newton Heath RMS



DEREK SKYRME

Farewells were said to Derek Skyrme (26 October 1929-3 May 2014) at St Luke's, Brislington, the same church where he married his wife Shirley. Drivers, active and retired, joined the family gathering on 23 May. Derek's loves were Shirley, the Welsh, the Navy and fishing. Born at Pembroke Dock he worked for many years out of Bristol Bath Road depot.

Graham Bellamy, Bristol

GEORGE REILLY A FIFER

It is with deepest sadness and regret that I report the passing of Brother George Reilly, a member of ASLEF since 1981 when he started on the railway in Fife, later moving to Edinburgh No 2, driving for BR then GNER, National Express and East Coast. George, a Fifer, was a respected colleague and friend to all who knew him. A great railwayman, and very recently a union learning rep for train drivers on the East Coast. The man was taken in the prime of his life, aged 53, very suddenly after a short illness. People will remember George for his love of family, as a loving husband to Fiona and a great father to Kevin and Kenneth and great friend of Donna. His other passion was fishing, which he enjoyed enormously with fellow Fifer and East Coast driver Brian Kerr and other great friends with whom he spent many a day in a boat (or in the pub when there were no fish being caught). His friends and colleagues from other TOCs and FOCs will find it hard to come to terms with the loss of George, but we have fond and lasting memories of his cheeky grin to help us cope. RIP George.

Rab Wicksted on behalf of all members of Edinburgh No 2

GEORGE RAVENSCROFT MASTER OF HIS TRADE

George Ravenscroft passed away, aged 91, on 16 April after two years' illness. He started his career in 1940 as an engine cleaner, and passed fireman at Longsight MPD before moving to Newton Heath for a short spell to be registered driver. He later returned to Longsight and became a driver instructor on electric traction and finished 48 years' service as a traction inspector at Manchester Piccadilly. George was a very conscientious person at work, and master of his trade. He was an active member of ASLEF's Longsight branch in his time and will be sadly missed by friends and colleagues.

Ray Bullen, Longsight

JOHN PEEL ARROWS MASTER

John Peel, a Newton Heath man born and bred, has died at 79. He started work on the loco in March 1952 and was a popular man with all grades, on and off the job. Closure of the train crew depot meant a move to the shed yard arranging all loco and traction movements. John was partial to a pint, especially when playing darts, at which he excelled, and spent his spare time at his caravan in Yorkshire.

S Black, Newton Heath RMS



We welcome letters, either by email to journal@aslef.org.uk or by Royal Mail to **ASLEF Journal at 77 St John Street, London, EC1M 4NN**. Each month the writer of our **star letter** wins a rich range of ASLEF regalia.



Probable cause

In the last six months it has been my misfortune to experience what, in my view, was one glaring abuse, and one very nearly, of company law, namely probable cause. On both occasions the colleagues involved were both in trouble under clause 9 for alleged misuse of mobile phones and, although no concrete evidence was produced, and all other charges were thoroughly refuted by ASLEF representatives, one was sacked while the other kept his job but with conditions. I think it is time ASLEF took a stand against this draconian misuse of law before we find ourselves being sacked for no good reason, without any evidence other than that the managers think you are probably guilty. Please, ASLEF, bring back justice.

Michael Delaney, St Pancras

Scotland be brave

Like many, I have been fascinated, and heartened, by the recent debates our *Journal* has inspired among my fellow union members. I have particularly enjoyed the debate surrounding LU RDW and, closer to home, the independence vote. Although I'm disappointed that some have resorted to tribal political cheap shots, petty name calling and childish point scoring, overall I'm delighted with the articles and letters in what could be a watershed year in British politics and what this might mean from a social and historical viewpoint.

The arguments both for and against independence have been thought provoking and informative but I remain steadfast in my support for independence. This is our chance to transform the political landscape of our great 'wee' nation for ever. It's an opportunity to sever the shackles of Westminster and create a visionary, diverse, progressive government. We can make bold reforms with new policies on renewables, climate change, infrastructure, Trident, health and social care, education, housing and try, to the best of our ability, to eradicate the poverty that blights millions. We can work towards creating a fair, classless, socialist society that will benefit all, not just the elite. We can become a beacon of hope for all other like-minded nations across the world and show them there is an alternative way to govern and to live.

Andy Ross' letter (*Journal*, March) echoes

THE COST OF HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GETTING KICKED ON CLASS 66

Other industries spend time and money as they realise a healthy worker performs better in a healthy environment. Class 66, by their design, has high levels of noise, vibration, heat, drafts, stuffy air, and fumes entering the cab. All sortable, but nobody wants to, so they hide behind cost. Earplugs are only a short term solution, in response to the EC, and some companies forbid them, so how do we stand?

Each early start deprives you of sleep. By the second shift you're adjusting and establish a pattern. However, when changed, you get the first problem recurring and, if badly rostered, go a week without proper sleep. Finish times can vary from midnight to early morning so, some days, to catch the next shift, you can be awake for 23 hours before going to

bed. Early turns need consistent start times, evenings consistent finish times and nights consistent start and finish times and as short as practically can be achieved to help us sleep better. Might improve our health, too, as diabetes is affecting a lot of drivers.

We appreciate operational needs but issues can be sorted if time is spent at the planning/diagram stage, not leaving roster clerks/control to sort it out. If a job runs all week, leave the same driver on it. We cannot book on under the influence of drugs or alcohol but can be rostered in such a way we're awake for far too long, which has a similar effect on us. Finally, drivers reporting things does not mean drivers moaning, but drivers doing their job!

Philip Garner,
Knottingley branch

many of my sentiments. This isn't a vote between Labour or the SNP, Alex Salmond or Ed Miliband, it's a chance to banish the shadow of various Thatcherite governments and ensure they will never return. It's our opportunity to empower our nation, to let us choose our own future, to be in charge of our own destiny. Never again will Scottish ministers have to sit idly by and watch, powerless, as Westminster dictates policies to our nation.

Don't be fooled by the scaremongering and spin from the nae sayers and prophets of doom from the Better Together project fear campaign. I'm reminded of that speech by US President Franklin D Roosevelt: 'The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.'

Scotland be brave, it's time not just to make a bright future for ourselves but for future generations in Scotland.

Paul Morris, Yoker branch

Your right to have a say

Democracy, I hear you say, Wullie Simpson (*Journal*, May)? Maybe you need to take a leaf out of your own book! Liam Tansey (*Journal*,

February) has a right as a fully paid up member to state his views without being shouted down because it goes against you and your leader's views. Yes, you have the right to state your opinion but the attacks on another's views doesn't show ASLEF in a good light as a democratic union. Democracy is the right to choose and say how your country is run. Not from back rooms by a few or on a golf course on a Saturday or at the football. As for the Labour Party, don't even go there! PFI, hospitals, selling schools off to private firms, the trams in Edinburgh, expenses at Westminster and Holyrood. Yes, you've guessed, I do not support Labour! So, Wullie, you may want to draw out your dictionary and look up democracy and leave Mr Tansey alone.

Mick McCann, Edinburgh

Hanging or beheading?

Over the past few months it seems that the most pressing issue around the Scottish independence referendum is the attendance record at Edinburgh No 2 branch of Liam Tansey. But Brother Tansey raises legitimate concerns about the way in

which our union arrived at giving support to Better Together. His criticism isn't really answered; instead it is brushed aside because of his attendance, or not, at branch meetings. I didn't know there were two levels of membership! Sometimes the ends justify the means but, in the case of the referendum, I believe it is the means that is of utmost importance. We have missed a real opportunity to have a debate capable of engaging the membership and maybe even bolstering branch attendance.

Whilst I'm sure that the decision taken by AAD in Edinburgh last year, and the process by which it was arrived at, was in accordance with the rules sometimes that is not enough. Other unions, the PCS for example, held a series of meetings and debates on this issue that attracted hundreds of members. They actively sought a broad participation from their members in a genuine attempt to inform their decision. Frankly, it is not good enough to say our position was discussed at a branch meeting and you should have been there!

There are attempts to redress this from lay members of our union who aim to organise debates where ordinary members can have access to the Yes and No campaigns and question them about the pros and cons and how independence, or remaining in the union, can affect our industry.

As for lazy attempts by the anti-independence lobby to paint this as being about Alex Salmond, at least give us the courtesy of acknowledging we aren't all SNP supporters. The choice between Salmond, Miliband or Cameron is like a choice between hanging, beheading or lethal injection; all slightly different but the outcome is the same. Independence will give the people of Scotland the power to truly influence our future, hopefully one that doesn't include a neo-liberal agenda! **Steven Nimmo, Edinburgh**

Brideshead Revisited



Bottoms up!

Tony West's article on greed on page 14 of the May edition of the *Journal* is illustrated by a montage depicting 'the corporate culture of capitalism'. However, the main photo unambiguously shows undergraduates in Merton Street, Oxford, celebrating the completion of their finals in the Examination Schools just around the corner. I feel sure ASLEF wouldn't intend readers to infer that a good education should be viewed in the same light as bankers' bonuses, nor that it is something to which ordinary workers, such as railwaymen and women, ought not to aspire.

Richard Griffin, train operator, Metropolitan Line, Harrow-on-the-Hill

Thanks, Richard. Good point. Our picture researcher (who has been taken out and summarily shot) was getting confused as he has never so much as sniffed the noble grape, let alone drunk the fizzy stuff, as he much prefers a pint of Old Peculiar, and was consequently careless about bankers celebrating a City bonus and students, some from working-class homes, doing the *Brideshead* thing. He will not do it again...

Getting the vote out

I would like to congratulate Brian Corbett on his victory in the recent District 7 Organiser election. Since I joined the railway, around 11 years ago, I have always found Brian to be very approachable, friendly and willing to provide much appreciated help and advice on all driver related matters. I wish him well in his new role.

However, I once again find myself somewhat bemused by the relatively low number of members bothering to cast their votes. In this case total turnout was under 50% for what I consider to be a very important ballot. The result of which could effect all our futures.



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For someone like me, who is relatively new to trade union membership, I find the apathy of a high number of my fellow members very frustrating, as the actual voting process is very simple and it takes little or no effort to cast your vote. I wonder if the union could address this issue and somehow come up with ideas to encourage members to take part in more of the various ballots that occur from time to time as, after all, the ability to have your voice heard through the ballot box, is part of union membership.

Colin Lawton, Bristol

Real politics for the people

I read Bro Williamson's letter about the proposed Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (*Journal*, June) and felt a great deal of pride knowing that after a large number of people had voted for UKIP in recent elections, attracted by the policies of yesteryear, here was one of our own talking about real issues.

Let's hope the Labour Party picks up on this and brings real politics back to the people and leaves UKIP to get on with their own bigotry!

Michael Reeve, Watford

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FAVERSHAM branch is selling mugs and tee-shirts 'devoted' to Mrs Thatcher! Both are £10 and illustrate the branch view of her vicious right-wing policies. They can be obtained from the branch website www.aslef-favershambranch.co.uk or from Andy Cooke at andycooke69@hotmail.com or (mobile) 07771 923831.

Picture this – a sky full of thunder

A new exhibition explores the seditious impact of mainstream, and alternative, comics. KEITH RICHMOND reflects on what the panels reveal about the world in which we live...

COMICS are for kids. From *Comic Cuts*, launched in 1890 by the press magnate Lord Northcliffe, via *The Dandy* and *The Beano* to *Eagle*, *Victor*, *Roy of the Rovers* and *2000AD*, the colourful weekly pulp panel adventures of *Desperate Dan*, *Dennis the Menace*, *Dan Dare* (Pilot of the Future), Alf Tupper (*The Tough of the Track*) and *Judge Dredd* (I am the Law) are strictly for the little ones.

That's not, though, how Paul Gravett and John Harris Dunning, curators of a major new exhibition of comic book art, see it. 'Comics have attracted the talents of some of Britain's most brilliant writers and artists over the years,' is what they say. The gallery, with original artwork and carefully preserved comics imaginatively exhibited among mannequins wearing those chilling *V for Vendetta* masks adopted by the Occupy movement, plunders the British Library collection 'going back two centuries or more' to flag up 'the seditious aspects of the comics tradition as well as comics' ongoing relevance to this digital age.'

'Ye are many, they are few' – *The Masque of Anarchy* by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Gravett and Dunning point up that the way George Cruikshank savagely satirised the excesses of the Prince of Wales, later George IV, and his court in the radical monthly *The Scourge* was the way Hunt Emerson, 160 years later, had a pop at Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in *Dice Man*. And the way *A Harlot's Progress*, six sequential engravings by William Hogarth on the decline and fall of pretty Miss Hackabout in 1732, and Aubrey Beardsley's *Lysistrata* in 1894, foreshadow *Jane*, the comic strip darling who bared all in the *Daily Mirror* to raise the morale of British troops on D Day, and *Varoomshka*, John Kent's political cartoon which, while attacking the



Pictures at an exhibition (clockwise from top): *Preparing John Bull for General Congress* by George Cruikshank in *The Scourge*; *A Harlot's Progress* by William Hogarth; *Varoomshka* by John Kent in *The Guardian*; *Dice Man* by Hunt Emerson; *V for Vendetta* mask

governments of Ted Heath, Harold Wilson and Jim Callaghan, sat somewhat uncomfortably in the politically correct pages of *The Guardian* in the 1970s.

The commentaries by Gravett and Dunning, on the accompanying information cards, and the wall posters introducing each section, are as analytical and informative as their selection, from the last couple of hundred years, is enlightening.

'Far from being merely the stuff of childhood and nostalgia, comics are an inherently anarchic medium, fraught with political and social jeopardy' – Paul Gravett and John Harris Dunning

It's all British – so there's no *Silver Surfer* or *Sin City*, no Stan Lee, Jack Kirby or Frank Miller – but there's a heck of a lot of good stuff. As well as *Punch*, *The Illustrated Police News*, *Ally Sloper* and *Andy Capp*, we get *Tamara Drewe*, Polly Simmonds' graphic novel based on Thomas Hardy's *Far From The Madding Crowd*, Peter O'Donnell's *Modesty Blaise* and Jamie Hewlett's *Tank Girl* as well as *Watchmen*, *Lost Girls* and *From Hell* by the prolific pen of Alan Moore.

Sex, as well as politics, rears its head and it's funny, after all these years, to see the *Schoolkids'* issue of *Oz*, from May 1970, the one with the infamous *Rupert Bear* strip drawn by Robert Crumb, which led to a high profile

obscenity case at the Old Bailey, in a glass display case next to that other leading light of the underground press, the *International Times*, with its Situationist aesthetics and politics.

'I pressed the fire control...and ahead of me rockets blazed through the sky...WHAAM!' – Roy Lichtenstein

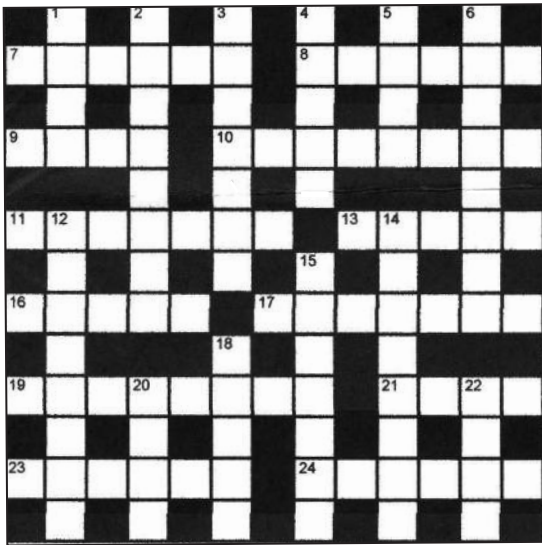
There are some glorious nuggets of information, too. Such as the unholy alliance forged between the National Union of Teachers and the Communist Party over here to get the government to ban American horror comics such as *Nasty Tales*, *Amazing Mysteries* and *Tales from the Crypt*. (The NUT was having a Mary Whitehouse moment and the CP, having a perpetual Soviet moment, just didn't like anything American).

And how Robin Ray, successful and utterly respectable advertising executive by day, was, by night, Erich von Götha, the pornographic artist behind *Torrid!*

It's a terrific exhibition and a timely reminder that comics, as well as making us laugh, can also make us think. Because they can be radical, and subversive, and they aren't just for kids.

Comics Unmasked: Art and Anarchy in the UK is at the British Library in London until 19 August. Admission is £9.50

Prize Crossword number 99 by Zebedee

**Across**

- 7 Turbulent airs around America from another country (anagram) (6)
 8 Removal of pressure (6)
 9 One might give support at a lower personal level (4)
 10 Cruelly set on guy like Benjamin (anagram) (8)
 11 Large frozen mass (7)
 13 Thoughts (5)
 16 Type of horse (by colour) (5)
 17 A particularly difficult or baffling problem (7)
 19 Subside (8)

Down

- 1 Manage to get one into the broken down building (4)
 2 Fifty breaking into embassy disrupted meeting (8)
 3 Professionals in court (7)
 4 Freshwater fish (5)
 5 Stop a hole (4)
 6 Twist someone's arm? (8)
 12 Puts right (8)

- 14 A written account of ownership, possibly (8)
 15 Absolute sublimity, completely and without qualification (7)
 18 Goes on foot (5)
 20 Highway (4)
 22 A young male horse under the age of four (4)



The winner of this month's crossword will receive Marks & Spencer vouchers to the value of £25

MARKS & SPENCER

Solution to prize crossword number 98 which appeared in the June edition of the ASLEF Journal

Across: 7 Banana 8 Oceans 9 Deer 10 Intended 11 Viaduct 13 Admit 15 Polar 17 Popcorn 20 Basement 21 Oaks 23 Pencil 24 Oldest **Down:** 1 Base 2 Sacred 3 Da Vinci 4 Boots 5 Leaned 6 Interior 12 Isolated 14 Foxtrot 16 Agency 18 Crowds 19 Deals 22 Kiss

Congratulations to **Christopher Cubitt** of **East Ayton, Scarborough, North Yorkshire**, who was last month's winner.

Name.....

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Thanks for all your responses to the 98th ASLEF crossword in the June edition. If you successfully complete this month's crossword please send the solution to the Editor, ASLEF Journal, 77 St John Street, London, EC1M 4NN by 14 July

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